

REMARKS

Attorney for Applicants has carefully reviewed the outstanding Office Action on the above-identified invention. Applicants submit that the application, as amended herein, is in condition for allowance.

Applicants have amended independent Claim 1 to overcome the rejections raised in the Office Action and to further define Applicants' claimed invention. Specifically, independent Claim 1, as amended, now recites a board assembly which includes a panel and a frame having a generally annular shape and including first and second sections, **said first section including an inwardly-extending ledge and said second section including first and second ridges extending upwardly from said second section**, said panel being retained **between said inwardly-extending ledge of said first section and said first ridge of said second section**, said frame including **a first snap-fit member positioned on said first section and a second snap-fit member positioned on said second section**, the first and second snap-fit members **cooperating to attach said second section to said first section**, thereby facilitating the assembly of said panel with said frame. Applicant has cancelled dependent Claim 4, amended dependent Claim 5 to depend from amended independent Claim 1, and amended dependent Claim 6 to provide antecedent basis with amended independent Claim 1.

Applicant has amended dependent Claim 8 so that said claim is now an independent claim. Claim 8, as amended, now recites a board assembly which includes a panel and a frame having a generally annular shape and including first and second sections, wherein **said first section includes a plurality of tabs**, each of said tabs including a first locking surface, and

wherein **said second section includes a plurality of notches**, each of said tabs being received in a corresponding one of said notches so as to attach said first and second sections of said frame to each other.

Applicants' claimed invention relates to a writing board assembly including a panel and a frame. The frame includes first and second sections snap-fit together to retain the panel between the first and second sections. In one embodiment, the first section includes an inwardly-extending ledge and the second section includes first and second upwardly-extending ridges. When the first section is snap-fit to the second section, the panel is retained in position between the inwardly-extending ledge of the first section and the first upwardly-extending ridge of the second section. First and second snap-fit members are provided on the first and second sections of the frame, respectively. In another embodiment, the first section includes a plurality of tabs and the second section includes a plurality of corresponding notches, such that the tabs snap-fit with the notches to lock the panel in position between the first and second sections.

U.S. Patent No. 5,307,574 to Huff, Jr. discloses a picture frame that has front and rear subframes. The subframes have smooth, substantially unbroken outer surfaces which sandwich a transparent sheet for placement over a photograph. Various attachment means are disclosed for releasably attaching the front subframe to the rear subframe, such that the picture is sealed from moisture.

U.S. Patent No. 5,987,794 to Lavi, et al. discloses a frame structure for displaying media, such as a sign, with a support member. The frame housing has at least one display opening, a

door for insertion of an interchangeable cartridge insert, and a generic guide on the interior of the frame housing for placement of the interchangeable cartridge insert. The interchangeable cartridge insert includes a media support panel and a rail member that engages the generic guide so that the interchangeable cartridge fits into and is supported by the generic guide. The rail member also has media supports for supporting the media support panel. The support member is disclosed as being either a base and leg assembly or a wall mounting device.

U.S. Patent No. 6,694,656 to Flodin, et al. discloses a frame system for displaying objects, which includes a main frame with a frame face that has an opening for viewing an object, such as a picture, and an easel back. The main frame has peripheral walls with female locking features and a receiving surface for engageably receiving the support panel of an easel back. The easel back includes a support assembly with a depressed central panel for biasing the display object and an overlying transparent window pane. The easel back includes male locking features for engagement with the female locking features on the peripheral wall on the main frame when the easel back is mounted onto the main frame.

U.S. Design Patent No. D402,696 to Rosen discloses the ornamental design of a whiteboard system having integrated marker storage. The front panel includes cutout pockets along each wall for storing a writing implement.

Applicants submit that neither Huff, Jr., Lavi, et al., Flodin, et al., nor Rosen, taken alone or in combination, teach or suggest each element of amended independent Claim 1 and Claims 2-3 and 5-7 depending therefrom. Specifically, none of the cited references, taken alone or in any

combination, teach or suggest the frame recited in amended independent Claim 1, which includes **a first section including an inwardly-extending ledge and a second section including first and second ridges extending upwardly from said second section**, such that a panel is retained between said inwardly-extending ledge of said first section and said first ridge of said second section.

Huff, Jr. is entirely devoid of any disclosure relating to a first frame section having an inwardly-extending ledge and a second frame section having first and second upwardly-extending ridges, such that a panel is positioned between the inwardly-extending ledge of the first section and the first upwardly-extending ridge of the second section. Rather, Huff, Jr. merely discloses a frame having a rear subframe that can be snap-fit with a front subframe, such that a picture is held in position between the two subframes. No disclosure is provided relating to retention of a panel between an inwardly-extending ledge of a first frame member and a first upwardly-extending ridge of a second frame member, nor is there any disclosure of a pair of upwardly-extending ridges on a second frame member, as required by Claims 1-3 and 5-7.

Lavi, et al. fails to cure the aforementioned deficiency of Huff, Jr., in that Lavi, et al. fails to disclose a first frame section having an inwardly-extending ledge and a second frame section having first and second upwardly-extending ridges, such that a panel is positioned between the inwardly-extending ledge of the first section and the first upwardly-extending ridge of the second frame section. Lavi, et al. only discloses a sign with a replaceable insert. The insert is not retained between first and second frame sections that snap-fit together, much less between an

inwardly-extending ledge on a first frame section and an upwardly-extending ridge of a second frame section.

Flodin, et al. fails to cure the deficiencies of Huff, Jr. and Lavi, et al., in that it also fails to disclose a first frame section having an inwardly-extending ledge and a second frame section having first and second upwardly-extending ridges, such that a panel is positioned between the inwardly-extending ledge of the first frame section and the first upwardly-extending ridge of the second frame section. Although Flodin, et al. does disclose a frame having a main frame portion and an easel portion which can be snap-fitted to retain a picture between the frame portions, Flodin, et al. fails to disclose retaining a panel between an inwardly-extending ledge formed on a first frame section and an upwardly-extending ridge formed on a second frame section. Additionally, Flodin, et al. is absent any disclosure relating to a pair of upwardly-extending ridges formed on a second frame section.

Rosen is likewise deficient. Rosen fails to teach or suggest a board assembly which includes first and second frame sections, wherein the first frame section includes an inwardly-extending ledge and the second frame section includes first and second upwardly-extending ridges, such that a panel is retained in position between the inwardly-extending ledge of the first frame section and the first upwardly-extending ridge of the second section. Rosen is also absent any disclosure relating to a pair of upwardly-extending ridges formed on a second frame section.

For the foregoing reasons, Applicants submit that amended independent Claim 1 and Claims 2-3 and 5-7, which depend from amended independent Claim 1 and contain all of the

limitations thereof, are patentable over Huff, Jr., Lavi, et al., Flodin, et al., and Rosen, taken alone or in any combination.

Applicants also submit that neither Huff, Jr., Lavi, et al., Flodin, et al., nor Rosen, taken alone or in combination, teach or suggest each element of independent Claim 8 and Claims 9-14 depending therefrom. Specifically, none of the cited references, taken alone or in any combination, teach or suggest the frame recited in independent Claim 8, which recites a board assembly having a panel and a frame having a generally annular shape and including first and second sections, wherein **said first section includes a plurality of tabs**, each of said tabs including a first locking surface, and wherein **said second section includes a plurality of notches**, each of said tabs being received in a corresponding one of said notches so as to attach said first and second sections of said frame to each other. Huff, Jr. fails whatsoever to disclose a first frame section having a plurality of tabs and a second frame section having a plurality of notches. Rather, a single notch is disclosed in connection with the front subframe, which receives a rear subframe.

Lavi, et al., Flodin, et al., and Rosen all fail to cure the aforementioned deficiency of Huff, Jr. Lavi, et al. fails whatsoever to disclose a board assembly with a first frame section having a plurality of tabs and a second frame assembly having a plurality of notches, such that the tabs and notches lock the frame sections to each other and retain a panel therebetween. With respect to Flodin, et al., male and female locking members are disclosed for locking an easel portion of a frame to a main portion of a frame. However, Flodin, et al. is absent any disclosure

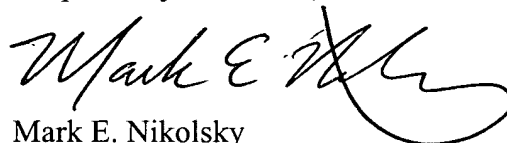
relating to notches formed in either frame portions which receive corresponding tabs. Finally, Rosen fails whatsoever to teach or suggest the notch and tab arrangement set forth in Claim 8.

Accordingly, Applicants submit that Claims 8-14 are patentable over Huff, Jr., Lavi, et al., Flodin, et al., and Rosen, taken alone or in any combination.

All issues raised in the Office Action are believed to have been addressed. Claims 1, 5, and 7-8 were amended, and Claim 4 was cancelled. Claims 1-3 and 5-14 are pending and are in condition for allowance. No new matter is believed to have been added. Re-examination is requested and favorable action solicited.

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Respectfully submitted,



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